

Design Access Statement and Sustainability Statement

Joining of the Garage to the House with First Floor Side Extension above,
and a Single Storey Ground Floor front and rear Extensions with Internal
Alterations

Highfields, Routh Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire



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Design & Access Statement

1. Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Michael Pagliaroli Architects Ltd in support of a planning application for the proposed linking of the existing garage to the host dwelling at ground and first floor level, together with new single-storey front and rear extensions and associated internal alterations at Highfields along Routh Lane.

Highfields lies within the settlement boundary and within the designated Routh Lane Conservation Area, as defined by Reading Borough Council. The property occupies an enclosed gated curtilage and is accessed directly from Routh Lane.

2. Proposed Development

The proposal relates to a relatively modern 'Potterton' timber-frame dwelling approved in. located to the east of St Michael's Church.

While the building is not of intrinsic historic interest, its use of brick, render and traditional roof tiles reflects the wider character of the Conservation Area and responds sympathetically to the conservation area, The property includes areas of exposed frame work externally and 'mock Tudor' posts and beams internally.

The proposed works seek to improve the internal layout and enhance the usability of both the ground and first-floor accommodation, while maintaining the building's traditional character and continues to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

3. Amount

The development comprises:

- **Conversion and linking of the existing garage** to form a gym, with retained storage space for cycles and household items.
- **Single-storey rear extension** to create gym room as part of converted garage space.
- **Single-storey front extension** forming an enlarged home office and a new entrance porch/reception with glazed gable.
- **First-floor extension** above the existing garage, using a half-hipped roof with dormer windows to maintain the building's form and character.

The proposal results in an additional **59sqm (GIA)** at ground-floor level and **38 sqm (GIA)** at first floor. Dormer windows to the front and rear provide natural light and headroom. All first-floor windows continue to face the property's own front and rear amenity areas, ensuring no loss of privacy or impact to neighbours. There is a single rooflight to the south roof aspect which serves a new ensuite and is positioned above head height.

4. Layout

The revised ground-floor layout provides an improved open-plan kitchen and dining space, with direct access to a utility room and the new gym room. The garage conversion provides a gym while retaining separate storage space.

The home office is enlarged, and the entrance hall benefits from an extended porch enclosure which has a glazed gable, significantly improving natural daylight levels.

At first floor, a new master bedroom with ensuite is created above the garage, and an additional ensuite is proposed for one of the east-facing bedrooms, served by a high-level rooflight.

5. Scale

The proposed extensions respect the scale and character of the existing dwelling. The first-floor addition above the garage is moderated by the use of a half-hipped roof and traditional dormers, ensuring a visually cohesive and proportionate form.

The rear extension remains single storey with a mono-pitch roof and roof lanterns to maximise daylight.

The glazed gable to the new entrance reception improves the building's frontage and provides a more inviting and legible entrance, while enabling the enlargement of the adjacent home office under the extended roof form.



Rear Elevation

6. Landscaping

No significant landscaping changes are proposed. The existing terrace will be modestly extended, but the wider garden and soft-landscaped areas remain unaffected.

7. Appearance

New windows and doors will be timber-framed to match the existing window frames, these are to be painted in a lighter 'sage green' to give a more welcoming appearance while remaining sympathetic to the Conservation Area.

New brick plinths will match the existing brown brickwork, and all new roof coverings will be in red-brown plain tiles to ensure a seamless integration with the host dwelling. Render panels will match existing render used elsewhere on the property with the timber infills.

The proposed construction will also provide improved thermal performance compared to the existing thin timber-frame system.

8. Access and Parking

No changes are proposed to the existing vehicular access or parking arrangements. The current driveway provides ample secure off-street parking, and the proposal does not reduce parking capacity.

9. Sustainability Statement

The proposed works comprise the addition of single-storey extensions and adding a first floor extension above an existing garage incorporating roof lanterns and dormer windows, together with internal alterations.

Energy Efficiency and Fabric Improvements

The proposed extension will have thermal performance which is better than the current dwelling in line with current Building Regulations and climate change adaptation requirements. The new external walls, roofs, floors, windows, and doors will achieve enhanced U-values to reduce heat loss and improve energy efficiency for such an addition

- External walls will be insulated cavity construction providing improved thermal performance of 0.18. We generally specify Hybris insulation products which achieve the target U value or better it.
- Roof structures, including the flat roof with roof lantern, will include high-performance insulation to exceed minimum Building Regulation standards. Again we would specify a Hybris product which will achieve the 0.15 U value required.
- Floor insulation to the extensions will use Kingspan Kooltherm to target or improve on the minimum 0.18 currently required by building regulations.
- New glazing and external doors will be high-efficiency double glazed units with low emissivity coatings to minimise heat loss and solar gain. Although the maximum U value required for the building regulations is 1.4 for doors and windows, we have suppliers that will supply 1.2 U value. All windows (if an MVHR system is not installed) will have trickle ventilation to comply with building regulation requirements.

These measures will collectively enhance the building's thermal envelope, reduce heating demand, and contribute to maintaining a proportionate carbon footprint for the size of the property.

Construction

As the existing dwelling is a timber-frame structure, the proposed extension will continue this construction method to ensure coherence and compatibility with the original building. This approach enables the use of sustainable materials, with all timber framing, structural elements and roof components sourced from accredited suppliers operating under recognised certification schemes (such as FSC or PEFC).

Using a modern timber-frame system provides a low-carbon construction approach, improves thermal performance, and supports responsible forestry and material sustainability, aligning the development with current best practice in environmentally conscious design.

A **Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)** will be specified, ensuring that runoff is controlled and directed to permeable or soakaway systems where feasible. In addition, **rainwater harvesting** will be implemented through the inclusion of **water butts** to the rear aspect capturing roof water for garden use and to reduce mains water demand.

Water Management

Internally there are changes proposed to bathrooms which will need to be specified with low flow restrictors. The kitchen utility room can be specified with A rated appliances.

All lighting will be specified to be LED to minimise any power required.

Biodiversity

Existing planting in amenity area can be relocated to accommodate the new extension link. 2 no bird boxes can be added to existing trees and an insect hotel.

Conclusion

The proposed extensions and alterations will enhance the usability, appearance and overall quality of Highfields while respecting the established character of the Routh Lane Conservation Area. The design is modest, sympathetic, and visually cohesive, ensuring no adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

The scheme is considered to accord with relevant Reading Borough Council planning policies and represents a positive and non-contentious development.

The proposal will deliver a high-quality and energy-efficient extension that enhances the performance of the existing dwelling. Through improved insulation, efficient glazing, and sustainable water management measures, the development aligns with local and national objectives for reducing energy use and mitigating the impacts of climate change.